DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 237 397 SO 015 105

AUTHOR Waller, Robert A.
TITLE The Humanities in a Global Perspective.
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the South Carolina Humanities Scholars Forum (Spartanburg, SC, April 19, 1983).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Role; Area Studies; Cross Cultural Studies; Cultural Awareness; Cultural Differences; *Educational Needs; Foreign Countries; *Global Approach; Higher Education; *Humanities Instruction; Non Western Civilization; Public Affairs Education; School Role; Second Language Instruction; Student Exchange Programs; Study Abroad; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

There is a need to incorporate a global perspective into humanities courses and curricula at the college level, to help students understand the international issues which confront all American citizens. This goal can be achieved by a combination of individual and institutional commitments. The key element is the faculty member's role. Humanities teachers should support the study of foreign languages. Current course content in the humanities should be re-examined to determine if it has an international dimension. The global perspective should be incorporated into existing units of instructional materials; courses should not be added. The curriculum should also include the study of non-western cultures. At the institutional level, statements of general education components for all colleges should bring attention to the global perspective issue. Support must be provided by the college administrators. For example, the dean might study the possibility of study abroad or student exchange programs. Humanists also need to foster international understanding in the surrounding community. The global perspectives concept may supply the cohesion so badly needed by college-level humanities courses. (RM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"THE HUMANITIES IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE"

BY
ROBERT A. WALLER
DEAN, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Robert Waller
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED237397

DURING THE COURSE OF THIS PIEDMONT HUMANITIES FORUM THE EDUCATIONAL CONSTRUCT WE CALL "HUMANITIES" HAS BEEN EXAMINED FROM A VARIETY OF PERCEPTIONS. TO MY MIND, THERE'S STILL ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE WHICH REQUIRES CONSIDERATION. I REFER TO THE NEED FOR AN INTEGRAL RELATIONSHIP IN HUMANISTIC STUDIES WITH A FOCUS UPON A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE IN HIGHER EDUCATION OR, IF YOU WISH, AN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES EMPHASIS. FROM MY LIMITED FAMILIARITY WITH EDUCATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA, I SENSE THERE'S A NEED TO BROADEN OUR CITIZENRY'S ACQUAINTANCE WITH OTHER CULTURES AND PEOPLES. THUS, I URGE FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION THIS EVENING A PLEA FOR GREATER ATTENTION TO INCORPORATING A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE INTO OUR HUMANITIES COURSES AND CURRICULA.

IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A COMMON FRAME OF REFERENCE, "GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE" REQUIRES DEFINITION. I EXPECT YOU TO AGREE THAT FOREIGN LANGUAGE LITERACY AND INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING ARE INTEGRAL COMPONENTS OF A HUMANISTIC OR LIBERAL EDUCATION. THIS IS A GOAL ACCEPTED BY MOST FACULTY MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS INVOLVED WITH HUMANISTIC LEARNINGS. ACHIEVING A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE REQUIRES US TO MOVE BEYOND THE GLITTERING GENERALITY. AS AN ILLUSTRATION PERMIT ME TO QUOTE THE DEFINITION PREPARED BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES: "THE CONCEPT OF A 'GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE' INCLUDES PROFICIENCY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES, INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING, AWARENESS OF OTHER CULTURES AND PEOPLES, AND RECOGNITION OF THE MULTILINGUAL, MULTICULTURAL, AND ETHNIC INFLUENCES AT HOME AND ABROAD. A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ALSO INCLUDES THE

50 015 105

COMPETENCE TO LIVE AND WORK WITH OTHER PEOPLES, CULTURES AND ISSUES, NOT JUST TO UNDERSTAND THEM." [1] AS THE TERM IS BEING USED IN THIS CONTEXT, THE CONCEPT DOES NOT INCLUDE SUCH STUDIES AS PURSUED BY UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OR BY GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION. THE AIM OF GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IS TO BRING INTO ALL OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ISSUES WHICH CONFRONT ALL AMERICAN CITIZENS AT HOME AND ABROAD. I CHALLENGE YOU TO CONSIDER WHETHER YOU INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY AS HUMANISTS ARE DOING ENOUGH IN YOUR OWN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES TO PROMOTE THE ATTAINMENT OF A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE.

FROM MY VANTAGE POINT WE ACHIEVE THIS GOAL BY A COMBINATION OF INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS. LET'S TURN TO THE FACULTY MEMBER'S ROLE FIRST. PERSONALLY I AM CONVINCED THAT THIS IS THE KEY ELEMENT. MY REMARKS ARE INTENDED TO REAFFIRM YOUR PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT TO A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE OR TO AWAKEN ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT TOPIC. YOUR PERSONAL CONCERN FOR THE SUBJECT AND YOUR OWN CONFIDENCE IN YOUR ABILITY TO EFFECT CHANGE ARE INITIAL FIRST STEPS. AS HUMANISTS WE SHOULD BE ATTUNED TO FOSTERING STUDY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND CIVILIZATIONS EVEN THOUGH THESE TOPICS MAY NOT REPRESENT OUR PRIMARY DISCIPLINARY BACKGROUNDS. NO MATTER WHAT YOUR VIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S PURPOSES[2] OR YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF GENERAL EDUCATION,[3] I ANTICIPATE THERE'S EITHER AN EXPLICIT OR IMPLICIT ROLE FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY. AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY WE NEED TO SUPPORT OUR COLLEAGUES IN THE LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT WHO BEAR AN IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITY IN HELPING ACHIEVE A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE. THE LANGUAGE SKILLS ARE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL

DISCOURSE, WHETHER BUSINESS, CULTURAL, OR DIPLOMATIC IN EMPHASIS. THE ARROGANCE REPRESENTED BY AMERICANS INABILITY TO CONVERSE IN THE LANGUAGE OF ANOTHER COUNTRY MUST BE COUNTERACTED. EACH OF US CONTRIBUTE TO REDRESS BY LENDING OUR BACKING TO PROFESSORS IN THE VARIOUS LANGUAGES.

SINCE MOST OF US DON'T TEACH FOREIGN LANGUAGES PER SE, YOU MAY BE WONDERING WHAT'S YOUR ROLE IN THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE THRUST. I SUGGEST IT IS SUBSTANTIAL. ALTHOUGH THIS FOCUS MAY REQUIRE OCCASIONAL NEW COURSES WITH A COMPARATIVE BENT OR AN INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR, I PERSONALLY URGE A RE-EXAMINATION OF YOUR CURRENT COURSE CONTENT. I ADVOCATE THE INFUSION OF INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS AS REPRESENTED BY THEME TOPICS IN FRESHMAN COMPOSITION; BOOK REVIEW REQUIREMENTS IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION; TERM PAPER TOPICS IN ANTHROPOLOGY; OR SIMULATION EXERCISES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. HOPEFULLY EACH OF US HAVE A SPRINKLING OF HONOR STUDENTS IN OUR CLASSES. NEXT TIME MAKE THEIR EXTRA-CREDIT EXERCISES ONES WHICH REQUIRE CONSIDERATION AND/OR PRESENTATION OF THE ISSUES IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. RATHER THAN NEW COURSES I PREFER INCORPORATION OF THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE IN EXISTING UNITS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL. FACULTY MEMBERS INITIALLY SHOULD UTILIZE RESOURCES TO EXPAND, DEVELOP, AND/OR LINK TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINARY CONCERNS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION. GIVEN A COMMITMENT TO FOSTERING THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE, THE POSSIBILITIES ARE LIMITED ONLY BY YOUR FERTILE IMAGINATION.

BEYOND THE CONFINES OF YOUR OWN CLASSROOM I WISH TO SUGGEST THAT THE TRUE HUMANIST ALSO BEARS A RESPONSIBILITY FOR CURRICULAR OR PHILOSOPHIC REFLECTIONS OF THIS INTERNATIONAL EMPHASIS. IN MY VIEW THE CURRICULUM MUST BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE, NAY REQUIRE, ATTENTION TO NON-WESTERN CULTURES. TOO FREQUENTLY WE NEGLECT ATTENTION TO THE THIRD WORLD NATIONS OF AFRICA,

ASIA, AND LATIN AMERICA AS CRITICAL TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AROUND US. AN APPRECIATION FOR THE DIVERSITY OF WORLD CULTURES SHOULD HELP OUR STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THE MULTI-ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF OUR OWN LAND AS WELL AS THE LANDS ABOUT US. WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO NEGLECT THE HISTORY, ART, RELIGION, POLITICS, LITERATURE, ASPIRATIONS, OR ACHIEVEMENTS OF A MAJOR PART OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION. IN CURRICULUM BUILDING THE CEMENT TYING COURSES TOGETHER SHOULD CONTAIN ATTENTION TO A FAIR REPRESENTATION OF ACQUAINTANCE WITH CULTURES OTHER THAN OUR OWN. HERE'S WHERE THE INSTITUTION'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY BECOMES IMPORTANT. IN MY VIEW THAT STATEMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION COMPONENTS WHETHER FOR A TWO OR FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION MUST INCLUDE ATTENTION TO THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ISSUE. AS HUMANISTS WE SHOULD SEIZE THE INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING THEME AS THE VEHICLE BY WHICH TO IDENTIFY CURRICULAR ALLIES IN FOSTERING THE WIDENING IMPACT OF THE HUMANITIES.[4] IN ADDITION TO THE GENERAL EDUCATION STATEMENTS ABOUT COMPETENCY IN WRITING, ACQUAINTANCE WITH A LABORATORY SCIENCE, AND FAMILIARITY WITH SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS, THE IDEAL INSTITUTIONAL PRONOUNCEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS SHOULD ASSERT THE IMPORTANCE OF ACQUIRING A GLOBAL DIMENSION. IT IS THE FACULTY MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BUILD THE CURRICULAR FOUNDATION AND THE GENERAL EDUCATION STATEMENT FROM THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL.

THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATOR ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS MULTIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES TO FOSTER THE INTELLECTUAL AND FISCAL CLIMATE IN WHICH THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE MAY BE NURTURED. THIS INCLUDES ATTENTION TO THE EXTERNAL REWARD SYSTEM OF RANK, RETENTION, AND REMUNERATION FOR THOSE FACULTY MEMBERS ENGAGED IN FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL STUDIES. ANOTHER IMPORTANT INGREDIENT HERE IS FOSTERING FACULTY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND/OR TRAVEL, INCENTIVES FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT, OPPORTUNITIES

FOR FACULTY EXCHANGE, ENCOURAGEMENT FOR APPLICATIONS TO NEH SUMMER SEMINAR PARTICIPATION OR SOUTH CAROLINA COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES FELLOWSHIPS, AND INDUCEMENTS FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDIES.[5] THE DEAN OR APPROPRIATE COLLEGE OFFICIAL WILL ALSO NEED TO EXPLORE THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION NECESSARY FOR FOSTERING SOME TYPES OF GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES. I REFER HERE TO STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS (YEAR-LONG OR A SUMMER'S DURATION), FACULTY AND/OR STUDENT EXCHANGES, OVERSEAS STUDY CENTERS, AND LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS.[6] THE LIST MAY BE ENDLESS AND THE ADMINISTRATOR'S RESOURCES MAY BE LIMITED, BUT THE DIRECTION CAN BE MARKED CLEARLY AND THE FIRST STEPS TAKEN. THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE COLLEGIATE ADMINISTRATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR INSTITUTIONALIZING THE APPROACH TO GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES. BE ASSURED THERE IS AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR THAT DEPARTMENT HEAD, DEAN, PROVOST, OR PRESIDENT IF THE WAY IS TO BE SMOOTHED.

THUS FAR, THE COMMITMENT I HAVE ASKED ON THE PART OF THE HUMANITIES AND ITS SCHOLARS HAS BEEN INTERNAL, DIRECTED TO OUR STUDENT CONSTITUENTS. PERMIT ME NOW TO SUGGEST THAT OUR OBLIGATION ALSO INCLUDES THE BROADER SOCIETY AS WELL. INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND LANGUAGE FLUENCY ARE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS IN OUR INTERDEPENDENT WORLD. ISSUES AFFECTING NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT, TEXTILE IMPORTS, CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE, AND WORLD HUNGER REQUIRE THE CONSUMATE SKILLS SUCH AS EXPECTED OF PARTIES HOLDING A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE. THUS, HUMANISTS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR JOB DESCRIPTION THE FOSTERING OF INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING IN THE SOCIETY BEYOND THE CAMPUS. SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES MIGHT INCLUDE: PROVIDING MEDIA MATERIAL TO THE LOCAL PRESS, RADIO, AND TV; FOSTERING DIALOGUES WITH BUSINESS GROUPS INTERESTED IN GLOBAL MARKETS; PROMOTING FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES ON THE PART OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS; AND ENCOURAGING THE PLANNING OF AND ATTENDANCE AT

CONFERENCES AND PROGRAMS AIMED TOWARD INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF INTERNATIONALLY RELATED ISSUES. OF COURSE AN EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO INCORPORATE LOCAL ELEMENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY'S DIVERSE CULTURAL AND ETHNIC STOCKS INTO THIS APPRECIATION PROGRAM. IN SOME INSTANCES SERVICE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MAY ENCOMPASS ATTENTION TO CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS AS WELL. I AM SURE YOU CAN ADD TO MY LIST OF SUGGESTIONS. IN A VARIETY OF WAYS THE HUMANISTS ON CAMPUS NEED TO REACH INTO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY IN ORDER TO FOSTER INTERNATIONAL STUDIES. THE BENEFITS WILL BE WORTH THE EFFORT.

NOW WE REACH THE POINT WHERE THERE'S A CALL TO ACTION. AS YOU KNOW, THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES UNDER CHAIRPERSON WILLIAM J. BENNETT HAS BEEN REORGANIZED TO HELP "RESTORE THE BASIC HUMANITIES DISCIPLINES TO A CENTRAL ROLE IN AMERICAN EDUCATION." WHILE THE ANNOUNCEMENTS I HAVE READ DON'T SPECIFICALLY INCLUDE ATTENTION TO GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE REVAMPED OPERATION, I FIND ROOM FOR INCLUSION IN A VARIETY OF GUISES. BEFORE THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN NOVEMBER, BENNETT DESCRIBED COLLEGE-LEVEL HUMANITIES COURSES AS "A JUMBLE OF INDISCRIMINATE OFFERINGS" WITH "NO RATIONALE AND NO GUIDANCE OR COHERENCE FOR THE MIND OR IMAGINATION."[7] NOT WISHING TO DEBATE THE MERITS OF HIS ASSESSMENT, I WOULD COUNTER THAT ATTENTION TO THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES CONCEPT PROVIDES THE INTELLECTUAL VEHICLE BY WHICH WE MAY SUPPLY THAT COHESION. THE OPPORTUNITY IS CERTAINLY BEFORE US. LET US SAY FOR THE MOMENT THAT AS FACULTY MEMBER OR CAMPUS ADMINISTRATOR YOU ARE CONVINCED THERE'S MERIT TO AN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES EMPHASIS WITH A HUMANISTIC OUTLOOK. I SUGGEST THE TIME IS RIPE FOR AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED AND THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES. THE PLACE TO BEGIN IS YOUR CAMPUS COMMUNITY WITH A STUDY OF CURRENT COURSE OFFERINGS AND CURRICULAR PHILOSOPHY. THEN PROCEED TO AN EXAMINATION OF THE TIME AND TALENT AVAILABLE TO ENHANCE ATTENTION TO ACHIEVING A GLOBAL

PERSPECTIVE IN OUR EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE. GLOBAL EDUCATION ALONE WILL NOT ASSURE OUR SURVIVAL AS MEMBERS OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY OR THE CONTINUANCE OF THE HUMANITIES DISCIPLINES. NEVERTHELESS, I BELIEVE THAT GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IS A STEP IN THE PROPER DIRECTION. IT IS NOT MERELY DESIRABLE BUT IMPERATIVE THAT WE GIVE THIS ISSUE CAREFUL ATTENTION. IF ADMINISTRATORS CAN PERFORM LIKE FACULTY MEMBERS AND GIVE ASSIGNMENTS, THEN YOUR "HOMEWORK" IS TO CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE IN YOUR OWN CLASS SETTING AS WELL AS YOUR COLLEGE'S CURRICULUM. I WISH YOU WELL IN THE TASK. MY IMMEDIATE GOAL WILL HAVE BEEN SERVED IF YOU ADDRESS THIS CONCERN WHEN NEXT YOU PREPARE A COURSE SYLLABUS, PARTICIPATE IN DESIGNING OR REDESIGNING A DEPARTMENTAL MAJOR, OR PLAN A STATEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY. AS HUMANISTS WE OWE IT TO OURSELVES AND TO POSTERITY TO CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE. THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING THIS SIGNIFICANT TOPIC.

College of Liberal Arts
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

FOOTNOTES TO ACCOMPANY

"THE HUMANITIES IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE"

BY

ROBERT A. WALLER, DEAN

[1]"TOWARD EDUCATION WITH A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE," REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE CENTER, RACINE, WISCONSIN, 1980), PREFACE. (COPIES AVAILABLE FROM ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN COLLEGES.)

[2]IN THE POPULAR PRESS, FOR EXAMPLE, CONSULT "FIVE WAYS TO WISDOM," TIME MAGAZINE, (SEPTEMBER 27, 1982), 66-72.

[3]SEE FOR EXAMPLE ERNEST L. BOYER AND ARTHUR LEVINE, A QUEST FOR COMMON LEARNING: THE AIMS OF GENERAL EDUCATION (WASHINGTON: THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING, [N.D], ESPECIALLY 36-37.

[4]"WIDENING THE CIRCLE: THE HUMANITIES IN AMERICAN EDUCATION," REPORT OF THE WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE ON THE HUMANITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION, 1981, P.7 (COPIES AVAILABLE FROM A.A.C.)

[5]GUY STERN, "FACULTY AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES" IN KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE CENTER, 1980, PP. 29-36. (DISTRIBUTED BY A.A.C.)

[6]W. WERNER PRANGE, "INTERINSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION: AN AVENUE TO THE WORLD" IN IBID., PP. 26-38.

[7]THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SEPTEMBER 29, 1982, 12: 3-5 AND DECEMBER 1, 1982, 1:2 AND 12: 1-2.

801 STRODE TOWER • CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29631 • TELEPHONE 803/656-3263